



October 7, 1991

Mr. Chris Brown
President, Ottawa Branch
Allergy and Environmental Health Association
6267 Castille Court
Orleans, Ontario
K1C 1X4

Dear Mr. Brown:

Thank you for your letter dated September 12, 1991 in which you expressed your ongoing concerns about the importance, or more appropriately lack of importance, being given to Environmental Hypersensitivity. As you so rightly noted in your letter I cannot in my role as Deputy Minister of Labour directly intercede on your behalf with the Ministry of Health.

As you may realize, the Ministry of Labour focuses primarily on occupational health. Therefore, we do not have the needed expertise to comment specifically on the possible relationship between Environmental Hypersensitivity and mental health.

Health symptoms noted by workers in the workplace are attributed to psychological causes only after environmental and other medical conditions have been thoroughly investigated and eliminated. This process involves extensive on-site investigation and chemical exposure measurements.

There continues to be a definite need to address the many complex problems surrounding this issue. If this does not occur, the whole issue will remain clouded. In the meantime, I will continue to encourage our physicians to address Environmental Hypersensitivity issues in the workplace with an open mind and to investigate cases with the full force of our resources. This will include continued co-operation with any medical group in assessing chemical exposures in a workplace where a cause of Environmental Hypersensitivity is suspected.

.../2

Hopefully, a continued effort by all concerned parties will add to the scientific knowledge base needed to resolve this controversial medical issue.

I continue to applaud your efforts and wish you the best in the future. Feel free to contact the medical consultant in the Ministry of Labour office in Ottawa for any advice and possible assistance.

Yours sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY
GEORGE THOMSON

George Thomson
Deputy Minister

c.c. Mr. Michael Decter
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Health